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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KABUL 002065

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SUBJECT: EX-TALIBAN PROPOSE PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS

REF: KABUL 1975

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) President Karzai gave the Ambassador July 29 a two-part letter the former had received recently from unidentified ex-Taliban reconcilees. The letter encourages the government to propose preliminary negotiations to 'the opposition side,' blaming 'the wrongful agreement in Bonn' for prolonging the war in Afghanistan. As a pre-condition for contacts between the government and the armed opposition the ex-Taliban calls for the restriction of foreign forces to military bases. The letter recommends the creation of a 'council of moderators' comprising 'neutral' Afghans to act as an intermediary between the warring parties and also invites the facilitation of the UN and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. It suggests that, subsequent to an agreed-upon cessation of hostilities, the council of moderators should form the core of a Loya Jirga that would achieve political agreement among all contending Afghan parties.

¶2. (C) In separate discussions with us, ex-Taliban (REFTEL), such as former foreign minister Wakil Ahmad Mutawakkil, have elaborated on the letter's proposals and suggested they would be well placed to serve as intermediaries between the IRoA and insurgents, which strongly suggests that they may have been associated with it. However, these reconcilees do not admitted to being in contact with the insurgent leadership, which has suffered significant losses, defections and personnel changes since the Taliban were expelled from Kabul seven years ago.

¶3. (SBU) In sharing the letter with us, Karzai noted that it called for government concessions up front and imposed no corresponding obligations on the opposition. He invited our comments and has been soliciting the reactions of other coalition partners and UNAMA, but we have no indication at this point Karzai views this as a serious proposal.

¶4. (C) Comment: It is not clear that this letter represents more than the suggestions of few ex-Taliban, although rumors are circulating. Karzai seems to be down-playing its importance. We will continue to probe.

¶5. (C) Begin Text of the First Part of the Two-Part Letter (Informal Embassy translation from the original Pashto):

In the Name of the Most Merciful and Compassionate God

Synopsis of the Inter-Afghan Agreement

The current tragic situation in Afghanistan requires that war must be replaced by peace. However, bringing peace is not possible without negotiations. Making known the views of the Government of Afghanistan and the positions of foreigners with the demands of the opposite side is not an impossible task. It might start with negotiations on simple issues in Kabul. It would be good to release some prisoners and to open schools. The Government should send a letter of invitation through mediators to the leaders of the opposition side, while providing a guarantee of their security. The opposition should be asked to select qualified people as their representatives. As well, the Government should select qualified representatives as members of its delegation. If the UN and Islamic Conference can play a positive role in the negotiations, then their presence could be beneficial as well. Other preliminary work such as the meeting agenda for negotiation conferences and lodging of the delegates are issues that will be addressed by each party.

God Grants Success

End Text of First Part of Two-Part Letter.

Begin Text of Second Part of Two-Part Letter:

In the Name of the Most Merciful and Compassionate God

Peace Step by Step

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Wisdom says that a crooked load will not reach its destination. The wrongful agreement in Bonn regarding Afghanistan caused the war to continue. Afghans get killed, Afghans lose their homes, and Afghans get lost in the winding river of international assistance. All analysts, scholars, and international community admit to this fact. After six years of bloody war, now it is time to make peace by taking practical steps instead of making promises.

Step One

The Government of Afghanistan should convince foreign forces that Afghanistan's problems cannot be solved by war. War destroys our country, creates hatred, annihilates civilians and scholars, assistance for the country gets lost in the river, foreign soldiers get killed, the economy is weakened, and political trust deteriorates in the world.

Step Two

After foreign forces are convinced, start widespread propaganda for peace. Love and compassion replaces hatred. Use good words in place of bad words. All fighting sides establish relationships to begin preliminary negotiations for peace. Both sides take necessary steps to create mutual trust.

A. Armed opposition should avoid the destruction of schools, clinics, public properties, roads, and bridges.

B. The Government should release those prisoners who agree not to fight against foreign forces. Foreign forces should not be allowed to conduct operations, search homes, or incarcerate people. Their forces should be limited to a number of military bases.

Step Three

Create a council of moderators consisting of those Afghans who are neutral, with a blemish-free record, known to be knowledgeable, of proven patriotism, obvious honesty, and acceptable to all sides without hesitation. This council would initially be tasked to perform the following duties:

A. With the highest national interests of Afghanistan taken into consideration, discuss with the Government of

Afghanistan issues of unwanted war and its demands as a way of establishing trust.

B. Meet with foreign forces with the facilitation of the Afghan Government. Make them understand the priority national interests of Afghanistan. With consideration of these priorities of Afghanistan, listen to their ideas and suggestions. And finally, they should bring the Government and the opposition to a position agreeing on solutions to problems that divide them.

C. With the highest national interests of Afghanistan taken into consideration, discuss with the opposition issues of unwanted war and its demands as a way of establishing trust.

D. Meet all Afghan political parties and political and religious personalities. Discuss with them ways and goals to achieve peace. Listen to their ideas and suggestions. Acquire their opinions and finally their trust.

E. Contact the office of the UN in Afghanistan. Explain to them ways to develop solutions for Afghanistan's problems, ask their assistance for peace programs.

F. Contact the Islamic Conference and ask for their assistance for peace program in Afghanistan.

Step Four

After discussing problems with all sides of the conflict and by obtaining their trust, under the supervision of the UN and Islamic Conference, bring all sides to the same negotiation table. The Government should fully guarantee the security and safety of the opposition at these negotiations.

Step Five

After discussing problems with all sides in conflict and

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reaching an agreement on a peace plan, remove the opposition from black lists, revoke all rewards for their arrest, and declare a complete ceasefire in the country.

Step Six

After reaching complete peace agreements on existing problems between the conflicting sides, an Independent Commission should be created to call a Traditional Afghan Loya Jirga. The Commission should be independent, free, and neutral. The members of the Commission would consist of the personalities mentioned in Step Three.

Step Seven

With assessments given from all sides, the independent commission of Loya Jirga will call for the Afghan Traditional Loya Jirga. The Loya Jirga will discuss all issues, with the priorities of Afghanistan national interests given first consideration. This way, all conflicting sides and political parties will reach an agreement to end war in Afghanistan. With Afghan national interests of the highest priority being the first concern, the Jirga will vote yes or no on all issues discussed. This way, the bloody war in Afghanistan would reach an end.

With the help of God

End Text of Two-Part Letter.
WOOD